

Appl. No.: 10/673,794
Amdt. Dated May 17, 2005
Reply to Office Action dated February 25, 2005

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this Application is requested.

Claims 1-6 and 8-12 have been rejected by the Examiner under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Eberhardt et al. (U.S. 6,130,613) and further in view of Leon (U.S. 6,701,304).

The Examiner stated the following in page 2 of the Office Action: "...Eberhardt discloses a method for paying for mail to be delivered from a sender in a first zip code to a recipient in a second zip code, comprising the steps of: affixing a radio frequency identification (RFID) tag to mail (col. 1, Ins 20-22) for the payment of the carrier fees for the first zip code; and the second zip code (col. 8, Ins 1-13; col. 8, Ins 60-63). Eberhardt, however, is unclear if the payments of the carrier fees apply to a first country; and a second country. Leon, on the other hand incorporates RFID tags affixed to mail that include payment of carrier fees for a first country; and for a second country (col. 4, Ins 10-18; col 8, Ins 57-67; col 9, Ins 1-12 and 46-52; col 11, Ins 10-12). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time the invention was made to include payment for a first country and second country on an RFID device so that tracking history of the mail is enhanced.

Eberhardt discloses the following in col. 1, lines 20-22:

"The present application relates to radio frequency identification tags including, but not limited to, a radio frequency identification stamp and mailing label."

Eberhardt discloses the following in col. 7, lines 67 to column 8, line 13:

"Circuit chip 620 may then be programmed to contain such information as sender, recipient address, delivery service type and billing information. Such information may then be read from circuit chip 620 during article sorting operations permitting automated sorting and automated billing. For example, once mailing label 600 is prepared by circuit chip 620 is programmed, the stored information may be read throughout the delivery operation for routing the associated package to its proper destination. Additionally, upon delivery, the billing instruction is read and the appropriate party invoiced for the services. Should delivery instructions change, circuit chip 620 may be easily reprogrammed with the new delivery information using the same procedures."

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Eberhardt discloses the following in col. 8, lines 60-63:

"The user may input a postage value or a postage value may be automatically calculated, in addition a user may enter at least a zip code and potentially delivery address information."

Eberhardt discloses a radio frequency identification stamp that may be used in only one country.

Leon discloses the following in col. 4, lines 8-19:

"Through communications device 160, host PC 140 is able to communicate with central processing system 120 and postage information system 130. Host PC 140 and metering device 150 communicate postage information (e.g., registration, funding, and auditing information) with system server 122, which is part of central processing system 120. Postal information system 130 is a commercially available system that provides access to national (and possibly international) postal information such as ZIP codes, rate tables, and other information. Host PC 140 and metering device 150 may communicate with postage information server 130 (i.e., to obtain ZIP code and other information).

Leon discloses the following in col. 8, line 57 to col. 9, line 13:

"The ability to modularize, define, and customize the indicia provides many advantages. With this flexibility, a "standard" metering device can be designed and adopted for use, for example, in an international market. In a specific implementation, a list of available elements is formed for the markets targeted for the device. This list can include information such as the postage amount, graphics, time and date of the indicium creation, creation location, and other pertinent information. A template can be created and stored (e.g., in the SMD or the host PC) for each market (e.g., each country). When an indicium is to be generated, the template is retrieved based on the (country) information entered by the user or the postage system provider. The retrieved template is then "filled" with relevant information from the element list and from inputs provided by the user. A standard metering device can thus be sold and used in various countries, without special modifications.

The flexibility provided by the modular indicia design also allows the metering device to generate different indicia for different classes of mail. Adjustments can be made to the indicia based on, for example, the characteristics of the mail piece, its country of origin, and the like. The flexibility further allows for easy

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configuration of the indicia to meet current and future indicia element requirements."

Leon discloses the following in column 9, lines 42-52:

"In an embodiment, taggants can be added to the ink to provide enhanced security. Taggants are microscopic identifiers (or beads) that can be mixed into the ink (e.g., fluorescent, conventional, or other types of ink), and are not easily detected. Taggants can be included in the ink used by the printer that prints indicia, such as the built-in printer within the metering device, or the ink used to print the preprinted label, or both. Taggants can also be added to the adhesive (i.e., glue) and/or the paper used for the indicium label. Generally, taggants can be added to any and all parts of the indicium."

Leon discloses the following in column 11, lines 10-21:

"The postage label can also be configured to include an identification device that allows for tracking of the label. One such device is a radio devices frequency identification (RFID) device disclosed in U.S. Pat. No. 5,497,140, entitled "Electronically Powered Postage Stamp or Mailing or Shipping Label Operative with Radio Frequency (RF) Communication," issued Mar. 5, 1996, and incorporated herein by reference. The RFID device includes an integrated circuit transceiver chip that transmits RF identification signals which can be tracked. Other types of identification devices can also be incorporated into the postage label and is within the scope of the invention."

Leon discloses a postal metering system that produces postage labels that are used for the payment of postage in only one country.

Fig. 4 of Leon appears as follows:

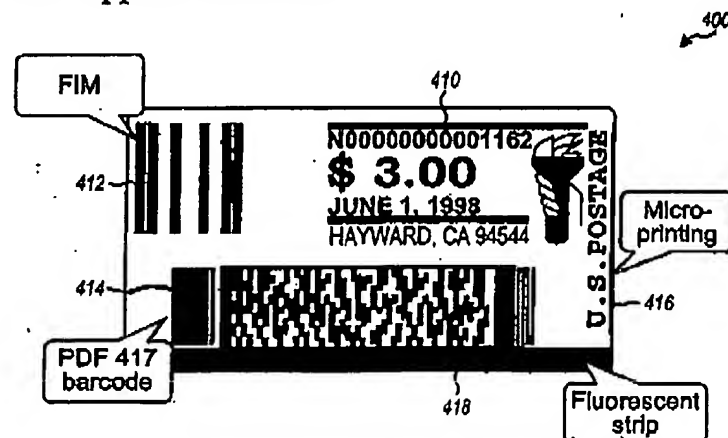


FIG. 4


(10037546.1) 4

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Leon only discloses a system for paying one country's postage, i.e., U.S. postage. Leon also discloses that Fig. 4 may be modified to pay for another country's postage. Thus, Leon is only paying for one country's postage.

Eberhardt and/or Leon, taken separately or together, do not disclose or anticipate the invention claimed by Applicants in claims 1-6 and 8-13; namely, neither discloses or anticipates affixing a radio frequency identification tag to mail for the payment of the carrier fees for the first country and the second country, for paying for mail to be delivered by a sender in a first country to a recipient in a second country. For instance, if a mail piece is mailed in the United Kingdom, the mailer's postage meter will place a Radio Frequency Identification Tag ("RFID") on the mail piece that indicates the portion of the delivery cost that is attributable to the United States post office, and that portion of other delivery cost that is attributable to the Royal Mail.

In view of the above, claims 1-6 and 8-13 are patentable. If the Examiner has any questions, would she please contact the undersigned at the telephone number noted below.



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